

# STRESS AT WORK POLICY

Version		5.0	
Date		05/2021	
Approved by Board of Directors		17.6.21	
Version	Date	Description	Revision author
1.0	September 2016	Created.	GAD
2.0	September 2017	Annual Review	GAD
3.0	September 2018	Annual Review Removal of Government's Fit for Work service	GAD
4.0	September 2019	Annual Review Addition: Stress at Work Policy – MHFA support available.	GAD
5.0	May 2021	Annual Review Addition: 3.2 – Monitoring Periods	GAD
6.0	November 2022	Separation of Attendance Management and Stress at Work Policy – No Change to content of Stress at Work Policy.	AMV

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## 1.0 Stress Policy

The Beckfoot Trust place a high value on providing a supportive working environment and on maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees at work. It is recognised that their wellbeing is important to the Schools performance and to the education of the children whom we serve. The Trust therefore, takes positive measures to encourage employees to be in the best health that they can be both physically and mentally. We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and working towards eliminating workplace stressors.

Primarily this policy is concerned with stress problems arising from the working environment, but we recognise that an employee's personal life may also lead to stress. The Trust is committed to implementing this Policy for all employees in order to enable individuals to cope successfully with the demands and pressures in their lives, whatever the cause of their stress, by providing appropriate support to employees.

For the purpose of this policy, health and wellbeing is taken to include the promotion of positive mental health of all staff, and the prevention and management of problems such as stress, anxiety and depression.

### 1.1 Definition of stress

*Stress is experienced when people cannot cope with the pressures and demands placed upon them. All work has its pressures and people vary in their capacity to cope with different types of pressure. Some levels of pressure, even when high, can be motivating and challenging. Pressures that can be responded to effectively are likely to lead to job satisfaction. However, pressures at a level where an individual cannot cope, or even too little pressure or challenge, are likely to result in stress.*

#### **The Trust will implement this policy by:**

- a) Improving the organisational environment through effective and sensitive management; developing working practices and procedures that reduce the factors which may lead to stress in the workplace and addressing the underlying causes of workplace stress.
- b) Implementing the HSE Management Standards for Work-Related Stress which provides a yardstick against which to measure performance in tackling the causes of work-related stress.
- c) Promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees, including the use of risk assessments and health needs analysis (at IPR/Appraisal Meetings) to identify and reduce hazards impacting on the health of the workforce.
- d) The use of employee IPRs/Appraisals are to monitor and identify areas of the where interventions could prevent or reduce health problems.
- e) Providing consistent, equitable and effective procedures to prevent and manage workplace health and well-being problems.
- f) Providing opportunities for employees to maintain and promote their health and well-being.
- g) The Trust undertakes to monitor levels of staff ill-health and absence on a regular basis, paying particular attention to workplace stress.

- h) The Trust accepts its duty to monitor and address levels of stress experienced by the Headteacher.

## 2.0 Principles

- The Trust will ensure that all employees who experience health problems are treated fairly, sensitively, with respect and in accordance with the Trust's equal opportunities policy.
- The Trust will aim to promote a positive and preventative rather than punitive approach to workplace stress.
- Open communication will be encouraged and promoted, whilst the Trust will ensure that employees' confidentiality is respected.

## 3.0 Shared Responsibility

- Progress can only be achieved through recognising that the promotion of positive health is a shared responsibility between the Trust and its staff.
- The Trust is a significant employer in the community and has a responsibility to ensure the continual development of a safe and healthy work environment and to create the conditions that enable staff to maintain and improve their health.
- The Trust has a responsibility to ensure that the promotion of the health of staff becomes a key part of the organisation's culture and that this is reflected in day-to-day work practices.
- Staff have a responsibility for their own health, for developing an awareness of the factors that contribute to ill health, and for participating in the efforts to raise health standards.

## 4.0 Specific Responsibilities

Senior Leaders and the Trust Advisory Board are expected to:

- Demonstrate their commitment and support to this policy by ensuring that the principles of managing health and wellbeing are implemented.
- Reflect the policy's principles and approaches within their management practice.
- Conduct Risk Assessments on workplace stress based on the HSE Stress Management Standards, and implement the recommendations which arise.
- Monitor the level of workplace stress.

Line Managers are expected to:

- Reflect the policy's principles and approaches within their management practice.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure that staff are provided with clear and realistic objectives and that performance is managed effectively and fairly.

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments/health needs analysis within their areas and provide modification of work where it is known employees are stressed.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within the workplace.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Follow the School's procedures and use appropriate support where necessary.

Employees are expected to:

- Support the Schools' Health and Wellbeing policies and initiatives.
- Raise issues of concern with their line manager or a senior member of staff.
- Seek to safeguard their own health.

## 5.0 Wellbeing

Beckfoot trust has appointed 12 fully trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) who can provide first response advice to employees in a crisis and can offer support through mentoring and signposting. This initiative forms part of the wider Wellbeing strategy. Employees seeking to benefit from this support should seek advice from their school HR team/Business Manager and obtain approval from their Headteacher.